

SITUATION REPORT NO. 5
INCIDENT NO. 98-001
DATE: June 8, 1998 TIME: 4:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Devils Lake Basin and eastern North Dakota flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: The level of Devils Lake at Creel Bay has been gradually decreasing since reaching 1,444.69 feet on May 29, the day the National Weather Service issued its final update for the Devils Lake forecast. That forecast called for the lake to rise to 1,445 feet during June based on normal conditions. Hydrologists report that precipitation over the Devils Lake Basin has been near to above normal over the northern portion. However, precipitation has been below normal over the southern basin. If precipitation is above normal, a later crest above 1,445 feet can be expected in July or later this year. But if precipitation were well below normal, the lake would be near the crest level for spring/summer at 1,444.69 feet.

Devils Lake at Creel Bay measured 1,444.53 feet on June 8.

State, local and federal inspectors conducted a damage assessment and found potential shoreline erosion on the south side of Camp Grafton. The inspection was conducted as part of the Preliminary Damage Assessment underway at Spirit Lake Tribe, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Reservation and 13 counties.

The Tribe has approximately 20 homes that are constantly having their septic tanks pumped because of the high water table in many areas of the reservation. These are tribal, privately owned and U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homes that are being affected. Septic tanks are being pumped as they filled without any reported hardships at this time.

A high water table has also contributed to problems at Sioux Manufacturing, where the building is settling. The Small Business Administration conducted an inspection recently, and a financing package for corrective action is under review. Officials report that water is located only one to two feet below surface.

The Benson County Emergency Manager has submitted a Situation Report that indicates roads continue to be soft and rutted, and more roads are becoming inundated by flood waters. Many sites are also eroding because of wave action from Devils Lake.

4. RESOURCES:
LOCAL: No change from previous reports.
STATE: No change from previous reports.
FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.
5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: Lutheran Disaster Response of Lutheran Social Services has been receiving calls from disaster victims in need of assistance. They have "fallen through the cracks" and have not qualified for disaster assistance. Lutheran Disaster Response is working with them to find other assistance. The staff is also nearing completion on its work to compile a resource manual. Lutheran

Disaster Response serves a 7-county area: Ramsey, Benson, Towner, Eddy, Nelson, Rolette and Cavalier.

The American Red Cross has provided temporary housing for a Ransom County family displaced by flooding.

6. **MAJOR ACTIONS:** Governor Schafer requested on June 5 that President Clinton declare a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration for 13 eastern North Dakota counties, the Spirit Lake Tribe and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. The governor based his request on flooding and high water tables caused by excessive precipitation on lands already saturated by six years of disastrous flooding. In addition, land-locked Devils Lake, continues its historic rise, laying claim to agricultural and residential property. Counties included in the request are Barnes, Benson, Dickey, Nelson, Pembina, Pierce, Ramsey, Ransom, Richland, Rolette, Sargent, Stutsman and Towner. A joint federal/state/local Preliminary Damage Assessment, conducted June 2 to June 4, identified over \$4.5 million in public assistance damage, for which the governor is requesting immediate recovery assistance.

Governor Schafer also issued a State Disaster Declaration on June 5 for the 13 flood-impacted counties and the Spirit Lake Tribe and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa.

A State Flood Coordination Center meeting was held in Devils Lake on June 4, 1998.

North Dakota State Water Commission (SWC)

The State Water Commission is considering the possibility of excavating the channel between Devils Lake and Stump Lake. Excavating the channel could remove approximately 410,000 acre-feet of water from Devils Lake while raising Stump Lake approximately 40 feet. A meeting was held on June 1 in Lakota with landowners who would be impacted by the proposed channel.

Devils Lake area landowners are expected to store approximately 21,000 acre-feet of flood waters on their lands during 1998 through the Available Storage Acreage Program (ASAP). This amount is based on amount of evaporation and losses during the year. ASAP began in 1996, storing over 8,000 acre-feet of water that year. In 1997 the program was expanded, inundating approximately 13,000 acres for 22,000 acre-feet of water storage. Applications for 1998 water storage are continuing to be accepted.

In an effort to reduce flooding around Devils Lake, the State Water Commission (SWC) and the Devils Lake Joint Water Resource Board have proposed a new outlet control structure for Sweetwater-Morrison Lake. The new structure would have a better capability for managing water flows leaving the Sweetwater-Morrison Lake complex than the current structure, and could help reduce flooding in the area. In addition, the control structure would have the capability to hold water in the Sweetwater-Morrison Lake 0.5 feet higher than its natural overflow elevation of 1,459 feet. The increased lake elevation would store an additional 3,500 acre-feet of water, thereby preventing it from reaching Devils Lake in the spring and summer months. In exchange for the additional storage, a 50 percent cost share has been proposed for the estimated \$43,000 structure.

The SWC will be releasing a newsletter discussing water management/storage efforts within the Devils Lake Basin. The newsletter will be sent to agencies and individuals on the SWC mailing list. Anyone interested in receiving this newsletter, as well as other SWC mailings, should contact the agency at (701) 328-4968.

The 20.1-foot lake level rise since February 1993 corresponds to a 1,604,000 acre-foot increase in storage in Devils Lake. The estimated average annual inflow to Devils Lake for during 1950 to 1997 is 86,030 acre feet. Estimated annual inflow is 265,500 acre-feet for 1993; 205,600 acre-feet for 1994; 402,000 acre-feet for 1995; 279,600 acre-feet for 1996; and 521,900 acre-feet for 1997. Total inflow to Devils Lake during 1993 to 1997 accounts for 41 percent of all inflow to Devils Lake for 1950 to 1997.

North Dakota National Guard

Work to connect Camp Gilbert C. Grafton to Ramsey County Rural Utilities was completed during

the Memorial Day weekend. A sewer line allows the camp to discharge directly into the sewer system and to abandon the camp's lagoon, which is threatened by rising Devils Lake flood waters.

The first session of Annual Training began on May 30 at Camp Grafton and ends June 13. The next session will be held from June 13 to June 27. Short delays are expected on N.D. Highway 20 as National Guard members transport equipment to the camp.

North Dakota Department of Transportation

Federal and state inspectors were in the Devils Lake District earlier this week to make damage assessments for state and county Federal Aid System (FAS) highways. This report will be developed in the Bismarck Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) office and forwarded to the Federal Highway Administrator for a decision on availability of emergency relief disaster funding.

Work on the N.D. Highway 57 grade raise project at the Narrows is still being held up by archeological concerns and other technical problems concerning the use of borrow pits for fill materials. It is expected that these problems will be resolved and work will commence in the near future. Plans call for elevating the road to 1,456.6 feet and the bridge to 1,462.5 feet.

Paving operations on the grade raises south and north of Minnewaukan on U.S. Highway 281 are expected to begin in a week or so.

A contractor is working on the gravel stretches on N.D. Highway 20 at the Narrows and at Camp Gilbert C. Grafton. The Narrows crossing has been given two applications of liquid asphalt, so the driving surface is now waterproofed. The same work will be done soon on the Camp Grafton grade raise and also Acorn Ridge.

Contractors were scheduled to bid June 4 on a contract to raise rip-rap sections on all the grade raises along N.D. Highway 20. The windy weather of the last two weeks has resulted in some moderately severe damage to the shoulders on N.D. Highway 20. This situation is being monitored closely, and if the shoulder erosion progresses to the point where public safety is jeopardized, some emergency work will be done very quickly to correct the situation. If the situation does not worsen, the damage will be repaired by the contractor who receives the rip-rap repair contract.

Work on the emergency grade raise on U.S. Highway 281 west of Fort Totten is progressing very well and most of the work items should be completed on this job within one to two weeks.

Plans are nearly complete for a new bridge and grade raise on the south Mauvais Coulee crossing on U.S. Highway 281. This project is scheduled to be let in July, with completion set for late fall.

A contract will be let this month to overlay or reconstruct the surface on portions of N.D. Highway 19 between the city of Devils Lake and U.S. Highway 281. Officials for the district office have not yet been informed of what action will be taken with the grade raise areas on N.D. Highway 19. Some areas are low enough to be threatened by any rise in the lake above the current level, so the department has been going through a reconsideration process on whether to pave them this year. A decision may be made to give the grade raises a light surface to carry them through next winter. Then, a decision would be made next year on permanent surfacing when it is known what the lake elevation is likely to be in 1999.

Work is continuing on N.D. Highway 57 in the Fort Totten area. The contractor is filling and rip-rapping areas north of Sully's Hill. DOT and FHWA officials are discussing the best way to stabilize the Ft. Totten Bay crossing so that the gravel can be placed and the highway reopened to travel. The road grade is at 1,447.5 feet, and is soaked from winter precipitation and water that surrounds both sides of the road.

Indian Health Service

The Spirit Lake Tribe has obtained 85 manufactured homes that FEMA located in North Dakota as part of the 1997 spring flood recovery efforts. These homes will be used to house individuals

displaced by flooding. Existing Indian Health Service grant funds will be used to provide water and sewer service to 25 homes. The Spirit Lake Tribe will fund costs associated with providing service to the remaining homes.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), St. Paul District

A contractor is finalizing work on efforts to elevate the lake level protection system for the city of Devils Lake to 1,450 feet. Work is now beginning on elevating the top of the levee an additional two feet to 1,452 feet. Additional work underway on the levee includes construction of the East Ditch pumping station. Another station, the Creel Bay pumping station, is essentially complete.

Officials for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) report that the initial phase has been completed to elevate and relocate flood-threatened sewer lines for Ramsey County Rural Utilities. That work included relocation of lines by Devils Lake waters. The first stage has been completed. Work included sliplining a gravity sewer line along N.D. Highway 19 that serves the Creel Bay area and installing a new sewer line on Eagle Bend. Work presently underway includes relocating sewer lines in the Lakewood and Acorn Ridge areas, and raising lift stations and manholes. The USACE has contracted with Olson Engineering of Devils Lake to oversee the project. Project costs are estimated at \$1.2 million.

Environmental studies and design work continue on the Devils Lake Outlet Project. Current plans for the emergency outlet call for a pipeline from the West Bay of Devils Lake near the Peterson Coulee to the Sheyenne River.

USACE officials report that emergency repair work has been completed on the Stephen Dike on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation. Flood waters had been eroding the rip-rap along the dike, located in Mission Township. The Spirit Lake Tribe, through North Dakota Emergency Management, had requested USACE technical and material assistance.

The Spirit Lake Tribe has asked for additional assistance under Public Law 99, "Emergency Operations and Advanced Measures." The USACE will evaluate specific requests for assisting in protecting public flood control structures, urban areas, such as St. Michael, or other public infrastructure, such as sewage lagoons. This assistance typically consists of temporary measures in response to immediate flooding.

St. Paul District officials are working with members of the Minnewaukan Flood Committee on flood protection measures for the city. The USACE has been conducting a Section 205 (long-term flood control protection) study to review the feasibility of moving homes in lower areas to higher ground and constructing a dike to protect the higher portion of town.

Spirit Lake Tribe

The Spirit Lake Tribe has been experiencing similar problems as the surrounding counties arising from the constant inundation from Devils Lake. The Tribe has been working with the USACE to help protect Mission Township from impending flood waters by stabilizing Stephen Dike at a cost of \$45,000 for a temporary fix. The amount of funding needed to actually stabilize this dike and make it a more permanent fixture is estimated at \$300,000. Neither the Mission Township nor the Tribe has this money at this time.

The USACE is considering emergency work on two other dikes in Mission Township. The Tribe is currently working on the Rights of Entry, Tribal Resolution and Assurance forms that will allow the USACE access to tribal lands for the completion of these dikes. They are running into some difficulties as far as the resolution is concerned, but hopefully will work out these details in the near future. These dikes that are being considered for additional assistance that could run \$10,000 to \$16,000 each to repair. Both of these repairs will only be "temporary fixes" as far as the USACE is concerned.

The Spirit Lake Tribe Emergency Management Office received inaccurate information earlier last month when it set the preliminary damage assessments for the roads to be at over \$1.7 million dollars. The actual amount of damage sustained by the Spirit Lake Tribe for roads is \$170,650.

The majority of damage occurred on Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) roads, and funding has already been established through the BIA for this project. Tribal roads have sustained approximately \$65,000 to \$95,000 in damages. The Tribe does not have funding to make repairs at this time.

The Tribe has also gone on record to support the raise of the Woods-Rutten Road as long as there is adequate water flow on both sides of the roadway. This road is another key access to the city of Devils Lake and surrounding communities for both tribal and nontribal members that reside in the region.

Ramsey County Emergency Management

The Ramsey County Emergency Manager plans to request, through North Dakota Emergency Management, that the N.D. Game and Fish Department conduct a boat safety promotion in eastern North Dakota. The request follows a recent fatal boating accident that occurred when a boat capsized. One individual drowned, and three others swam to safety.

The Ramsey County Commission has reemphasized that flooding in Devils Lake still constitutes an emergency. Homes are being flooded, and roads are being inundated and lost, such as the Woods-Rutten Road and N.D. Highway 20, south of Devils Lake. Flooding has caused economic hardship, disrupted services and has been laying claim to farmland. In addition, government budgets are being depleted. Approximately 10 home owners have lost access to their homes because of flooding and are traveling through their neighbors' backyards to reach their homes.

Benson County Emergency Management

Some Benson County homeowners, whose homes are threatened by flood waters, do not meet requirements to qualify for a waiver of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP granted a waiver for 1998 for Devils Lake area shoreline structures at 1,444 to 1,445.5 feet in elevation. The State NFIP Coordinator has stated that, in order to qualify for the waiver, property owners are required to have purchased insurance by March 1, 1998. The waiver suspends a policy provision calling for 90 days of continuous inundation as a condition for considering property as a total loss. The new waiver requires property owners to buy back the salvage and to move the building to a new location that is at an elevation of 1,460 feet or higher. Owners of buildings relocated under prior waivers are not eligible to receive the benefits of this latest waiver.

The Benson County Commission has issued a county disaster declaration.

The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has received emergency declarations from the cities of Walhalla, Hamilton and Cavalier in Pembina County, and disaster declaration from Stutsman County.

1997 Spring Flood

FEMA and North Dakota Emergency Management announced on May 29 the approval of four grants totaling \$1,477,844 to help fund improvements to sanitary and storm-sewer facilities in the city of Fargo. Funds are provided through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to assist in financing projects aimed at reducing the risk of future flood losses in Fargo.

The 1997 Spring Flood Individual and Family Grant Program, administered by North Dakota Emergency Management, has approved more than \$14.25 million in grants to individuals for flood losses. The average IFGP grant is \$1,349. The staff has closed over 23,250 cases.

Also relating to the 1997 flood, as of May 21, FEMA and State Emergency Management Public Assistance staffs had received 4,470 Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) and had obligated funds for 4,399 DSRs. DSRs have been completed for 426 of the 440 applicants for the 1997 flood. At this time, nearly \$121 million in infrastructure repairs, emergency work and debris removal has been determined to be eligible statewide.

The North Dakota Hazard Mitigation Team has approved the entire 1997 flood allocation \$39.9 million available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for projects designed to reduce or eliminate the risk of future flooding statewide. To date, nearly \$32.1 million available funds have been approved, or are pending FEMA approval. Projects include acquisition of properties in

floodplains and infrastructure enhancements to include sluice gates, flap gates and lift stations.

As of June 8, the Small Business Administration (SBA) has fully disbursed approximately 98 percent of the net loans approved to victims of the 1997 floods. The SBA has approved more than \$182.4 million in low-interest loans for businesses and individuals. To date, the SBA has received 11,662 loan applications, 6,978 of which have been approved.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The next State Flood Coordination Center meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m., July 16, 1998, at the Ramsey County Courthouse basement meeting room.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director